



Fact Sheet:

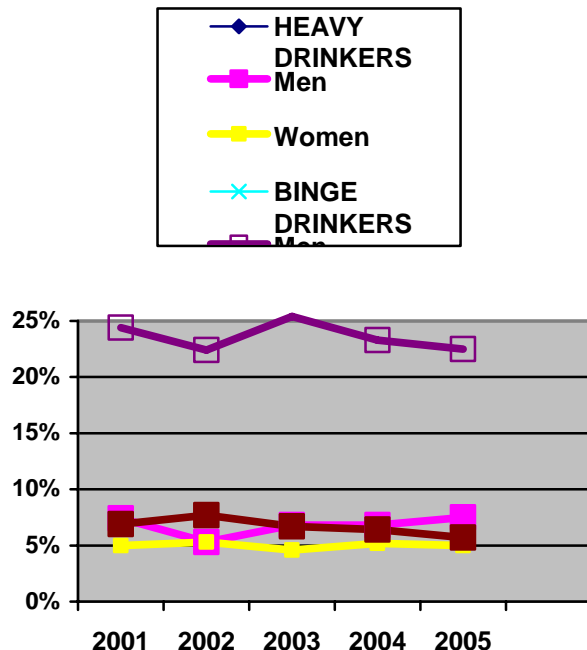


Drinking-Related Behaviors

Trends in key drinking-related behaviors in the California adult population since 1984 are tracked through the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. This fact sheet will focus on BRFS results 2001-2005 for the following.

- Heavy Drinking: More than two drinks per day for men, or more than one drink per day for women.
- Binge Drinking: Consumption of five or more drinks on a single occasion one or more times in the last month.

GENDER



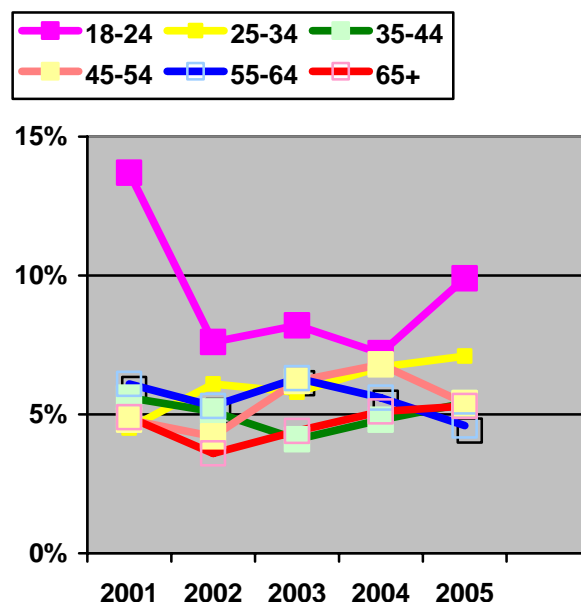
A higher percent of male respondents were likely to be heavy drinkers than binge drinkers. Women drink less overall than men, but the percentage of

women who binge is greater than the percentage of women who drink heavily, making bingeing the primary pattern of drinking among women. This issue is of concern because binge drinking carries a high risk of injury and other serious health consequences.

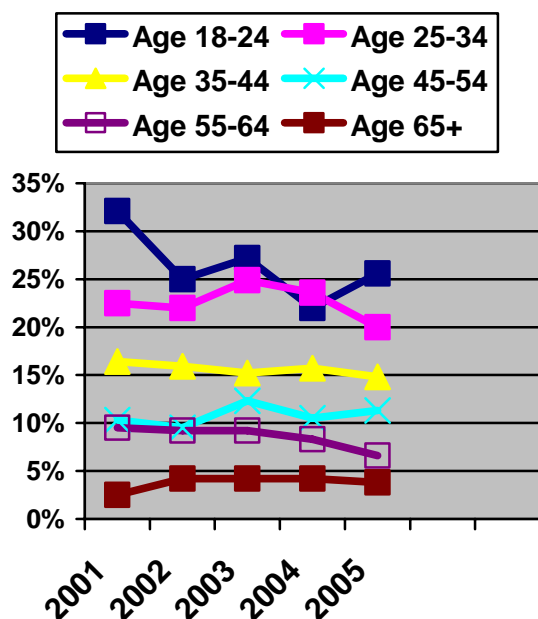
Age

Younger adults are more likely to drink heavily than older persons, though this is decreasing among the youngest. Trends are mixed in other age groups.

HEAVY DRINKERS BY AGE GROUP



BINGE DRINKERS BY AGE GROUP



Binge drinking trends are stable or decreasing in all age groups.

Conclusions

Heavy alcohol consumption is approximately equal among men and women, but men are much more likely to binge. Women's binge drinking is higher than heavy drinking. Heavy drinking is somewhat more prevalent among young adults than among the older population. These behaviors pose health and safety risks to the general population, as well as to those actually consuming the alcohol.

How the Behaviors Were Measured

The prevalence of health practices and behaviors in California is measured through the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). BRFSS is a random-digit dialing telephone survey of adults in California and the rest of the United States. Results are

weighted to reflect the California population as a whole. BRFSS is coordinated and partially supported by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and is conducted by the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services.